

The Bridge Builders

A Look at Nomads, Genghis Kahn and the Mongols



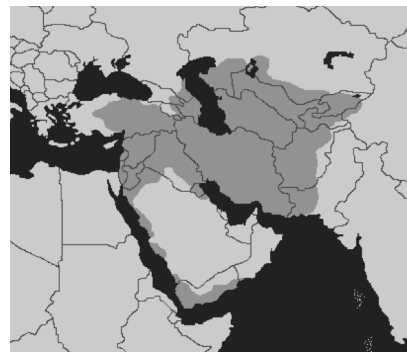
AP World History

Turkish Nomads

- From Central Asia, nomadic herders
- Fluidity in social classes
- Autonomous clans and tribes
- Converted to Islam in 10th century
- Tribal confederations ruled by "Khans"
- Relied upon cavalry

Turkish Empires

- Saljuq Turks took control of Abbasid Empire after gradual integration - extended empire under "sultans"
- Saljuq Turks began migrating to Anatolia during 11th century - much of Anatolia converted to Islam
- Ghaznavid Turks dominate northern India through the Delhi Sultanate



Saljuq Turks

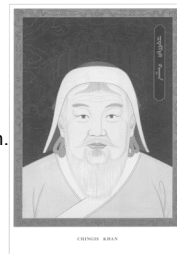
Reading

- According to the article what was Genghis Kahn's legacy? How does POV become a factor?
- What is the significance of Black Rose's praise of Genghis Kahn?



The Canterbury Tales, 1390 Geoffrey Chaucer

This noble king was called Genghis Khan,
Who in his time was of great renown
That there was nowhere in no region
So excellent a lord in all things.
He lacked nothing that belonged to a king.
As of the sect of which he was born
He kept his law, to which that he was sworn.
And thereto he was hardy, wise, and rich,
And piteous and just, always liked;
Soothe of his word, benign, and honorable,
Of his courage as any center stable;
Young, fresh, and strong, in arms desirous
As any bachelor of all his house.
A fair person he was and fortunate,
And kept always so well royal estate
That there was nowhere such another man.
This noble king, the Tartar Genghis Khan.



Mongol Image

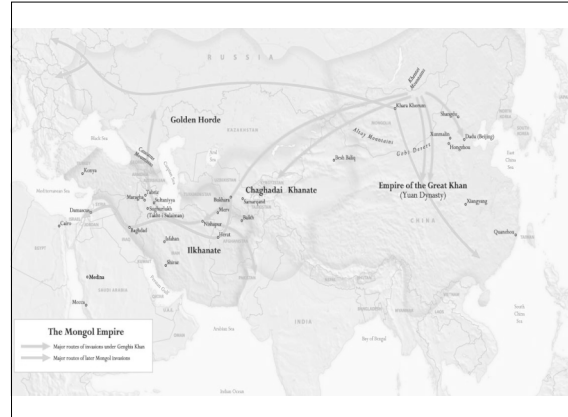
- Middle Ages / Renaissance = positive
- Enlightenment (1700's) = negative
- Seen as barbarians
- Montesquieu - "the most singular people on earth."
- Voltaire - "wild sons of rapine, who live in tents, in chariots, and in the fields." Who "detest our arts, our customs, and our laws; and therefore mean to change them all; to make this splendid seat of empire one vast desert, like their own."

Mongols as a Whole

- No technological break throughs
- No new religions
- Few books and plays
- No new crops or agricultural methods
- Few artifacts and buildings

What did they build?

- Only thing Mongols built extensively was bridges.
- Why is this significant?

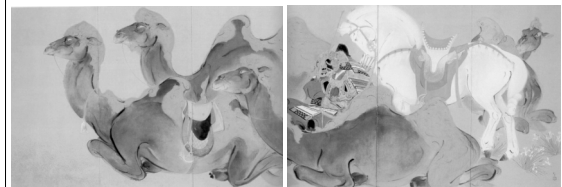


Genghis Kahn

- Despite illiteracy, he had modern ideas, including:
 - A professional and mobile army
 - A commitment to global commerce
 - A secularized system of laws
 - Religious tolerance

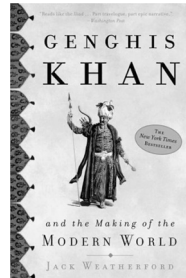
Military Might

- Killed all who resisted
- Leveled Baghdad
- 18.4 million estimated killed in China



Military Might

- Excerpt from:



Military Might

- Superior military tactics
- Extreme discipline and loyalty
- Used advanced weapons from defeated cultures
- Focused on intelligence gathering, learning geography

Trade

- Nomads understood importance of trade
- Built up roads, extended the Grand Canal in China
- Set up post offices/trading posts
- Protected merchants, gave them a higher status
- Set up merchant associations - *ortoghs*
- Allowed safe passage to everyone

Religious Tolerance

- No intention of spreading own religion
- Offered tax benefits to all religious leaders (why?)
- Muslims brought to China to help with administration

After Genghis Khan

- Heirs divide empire
- Khubilai Khan establishes Yuan Dynasty in China in 1279 - separated Mongols from Chinese, brought in Muslim administrators, increased toleration
- Golden Horde of Mongols overrun Russia in 1237, parts of Eastern Europe in 1241
- In 1295, Mongol leader in Persia converts to Islam

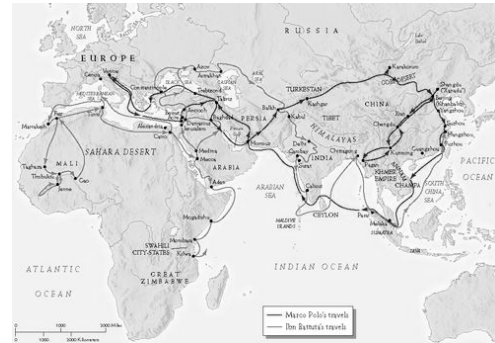
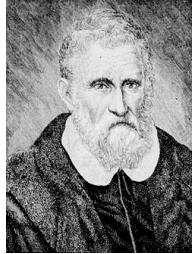


Decline of Mongol Rule

- In Persia -
 - Excessive spending
 - Factional struggles
 - Last ruler dies without a heir
- In China -
 - Economic decline
 - Power struggles and civil war
 - Bubonic plague in 1330's lead to final collapse by 1368

Bridges

- More Asian products available to Europe
- Europeans travel to Asia, return with great stories
- Marco Polo spends 17 years in Mongol court
- His book inspires European imagination



Bridges

- Portuguese look for quicker route to Asia around Africa
- Columbus sails west with Marco Polo's journal - trying to find Mongol China



Bridges

- Would Columbus have been inspired to sail the ocean blue without the dreams of riches inspired by Marco Polo's writings?
- Can we give Genghis Kahn and the Mongols credit for the Age of Exploration?